What is claimed is:

1.   A method for determining part replacement related information by an

end user, comprising:

5   obtaining an associated identifier of a part by the end user;

automatically coupling by a scanner interface the identifier of the part to a

network enabled browser;

automatically connecting by the browser over a network connection to a

remote database to retrieve replacement related information for the part, such

10   database searchable by the associated identifier; and

automatically displaying by the browser for the end user the retrieved

replacement related information for the part.

2.   A method according to claim 1, wherein the identifier of the part is a

15   selected one of a UPC identifier, product-identifier mark, and textual product

identifier.

3.   A method according to claim 1, further comprising:

obtaining at least one user preference; and

20   arranging the retrieved replacement related information according to the at

least one user preference.

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4.   A method according to claim 3, wherein the user preference is a

selected one of limiting price, limiting distance to travel to obtain a replacement part,

limiting shipping time for the replacement part, limiting time to effect part

replacement, and only displaying a vendor having the replacement part in stock.

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5.   A method according to claim 4, further comprising:

categorizing the retrieved replacement related information into plural

categories;

wherein such categories are sorted according to the at least one user

10   preference.

6.   A method according to claim 3, further comprising:

identifying at least one provider within the retrieved replacement related

information having a replacement part in stock; and

15   prominently displaying the at least one provider;

wherein prominently displaying includes sorting the retrieved replacement

related information so that the at least one provider is at the top of such retrieved

information.

20   7.   A method according to claim 1, in which the network connection is a link

with the Internet, the method further comprising:

providing the associated identifier in a predetermined format, such format

being a selected one of a bar-code format, a product-identifier mark, and a verbal

identifier;

wherein a portable bar-code scanner is utilized to obtain the associated

5   identifier.

8.   A method according to claim 1, the method further comprising:

contacting a cross-reference hub;

searching the cross-reference hub with the associated identifier to obtain at

least one additional product identifier; and

10   automatically searching the remote database with the at least one additional

product identifier to retrieve replacement related information for the part.

9.   A method according to claim 8, wherein the associated identifier is a

non-unique product category reference, and the at least one additional product

15   identifier is partially unique.

10.   A method according to claim 8, further comprising:

semantically analyzing the retrieved replacement related information; and

reorganizing the retrieved replacement related information according such

20   analysis.

11.   An article of manufacture, comprising:

a computer readable medium;

wherein encoded on the computer readable medium are instructions capable of causing a processor to perform the steps of claim 1.

12.	A method according to claim 1, in which the replacement related

5	information includes related part data, where a related part is one that requires replacement along with the part.

13.	A method according to claim 1, further comprising:

determining a geographic location for the part;

10	identifying vendors of a replacement part for the part, each vendor having a geographic location; and

sorting the vendors according to their geographic proximity to the part.

14.	A method according to claim 13, further comprising:

15	providing a proximity preference, such preference set to user election if such election has been made, otherwise to a predetermined value; and

culling the retrieved replacement information according to the proximity preference.

20	15.	A method according to claim 13, further comprising:

receiving user-specified price terms for a replacement part for the part;

identifying, from the retrieved replacement information, a sales price offered by vendors for the replacement part; and

culling the retrieved replacement information according to the user-specified

price terms.

16.   An article of manufacture, comprising:

5   a computer readable medium;

wherein encoded on the computer readable medium are instructions capable

of causing a processor to perform the steps of claim 15.

17.   A method according to claim 1, further comprising:

10   receiving user-specified price terms for a replacement part for the part;

identifying, from the retrieved replacement information, a sales price offered by

vendors for the replacement part; and

culling the retrieved replacement information according to the user-specified

price terms.

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18.   A method according to claim 1, the method further comprising:

retrieving from the remote database replacement related concerns, such

concerns including warning and suggestions for a user seeking to replace the part;

retrieving from the remote database identification of related parts requiring

20   replacement along with the part;

displaying the replacement related concerns to the user; and

notifying the user of the related parts requiring replacement.

19.   A method according to claim 18, wherein an expert system interactively displays the replacement related concerns and notification of related parts requiring replacement.

20.   A system for determining part replacement related information by an end user, comprising:

a scanner for scanning an associated identifier of a part;

a network-enabled browsing arrangement; and

a scanner interface facilitating communication between the scanner interface and the network-enabled browsing arrangement, such communication including transferring the associated identifier to the browsing arrangement;

wherein the browser automatically connects to a remote database over a network to retrieve replacement related information for the part.

21.   A system according to claim 20, further comprising:

a computing device comprising a processor capable of being directed to process commands stored in a program memory, and an input/output port;

wherein

the scanner is in communication with the input/output port,

the browsing arrangement is provided as a first sequence of program commands stored in the program memory for execution by the processor, and

the scanner interface is provided as a second sequence of program commands stored in the program memory for execution by the processor, where the

scanner interface receives the scanned associated identifier through the input/output

port and provides such identifier to the browsing arrangement.

22.   A system according to claim 20, wherein the scanner is incorporated

5   into the computing device.

23.   A system, comprising:

means for scanning an associated identifier of a part by the end user;

means for automatically coupling by a scanner interface the scanned identifier

10   of the part to a network enabled browser;

means for automatically connecting by the browser over a network connection

to a remote database to retrieve replacement related information for the part, such

database searchable by the associated identifier; and

means for automatically displaying by the browser for the end user the

15   retrieved replacement related information for the part.

24.   A system according to claim 23, further comprising:

means for obtaining at least one user preference; and

means for arranging the retrieved replacement related information according

20   to the at least one user preference.